



# YOUR CAREER CAN THRIVE IN TURBULENT TIMES

We've all known someone who, no matter how bad things got, always seemed to land on her feet. "Just lucky," some of us might think. "Well connected," others may conclude. In fact, the keys to success don't go out the window when the odds seem stacked against us. They become even more important, and if you stick with them you're more likely to keep your career moving forward even through tough times.

The good news? You probably already know what you need to do to keep your career from stalling. It's pretty much what you did to put yourself on an upward trajectory in the first place. Here are five quick tips for staying on track:

1. **Keep positive.** Staying upbeat during a downturn isn't easy. That's why maintaining a "can do" attitude gives you an advantage. People naturally prefer to work with or for someone with a positive outlook. And it's not just good for your career; according to studies, optimism is also good for your health. Fortunately, research also shows optimism isn't inborn, and that people can learn to think optimistically.
2. **Be persistent.** In a weak job market, it's tempting to think things are so bad the effort you put in doesn't really matter. Resist those thoughts, and instead put your positive thinking into action.
3. **Make yourself more valuable.** You were hired because of your ability to do things that get the job done. When circumstances make "do more with less" the workplace mantra, it's a great time to show other abilities you bring to the table. Demonstrate skills you already have but have never used in your job before – fluency in a foreign language, a computer skill, expertise in a specialized area, etc. – or communicate your willingness to learn something new. One way or another, if you're versatile, you're more valuable.
4. **Open up your options.** It's good to have a Plan B. Even when things are unsettled, usually there are opportunities in large organizations. You should keep track of what those opportunities are and which ones might be suitable for you. Being on the inside gives you advantages in going after openings. Use them.
5. **Be prepared.** Desperation makes everything more difficult, so avoid being in a position in which a pay cut or layoff would be catastrophic for you. Even if there are no dark clouds on the horizon, your financial plan should include creating a cushion in case things turn bad. That means keeping debt down and having enough set aside to get by for a while if necessary.

Finally, even if you've moved up the career ladder pretty much on your own, that doesn't mean you don't need help if you're suddenly sliding down. Even successful and talented people can feel overwhelmed by new challenges. If your finances are out of control, you're having problems coping with stress, your relationships with your family are strained or any other work or life issues are more than you can handle, get help right away. Your EAP can provide it.

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